

TO: Mr. Harold A. Lett
Consultant

FROM: Mr. Roy E. Norris
Industrial Relations Secretary

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS DEPARTMENT
Report for September
1945

The long expected onset of reconversion began to be felt in September. We were fortified by the results of good groundwork being laid over which displaced war workers walked to other jobs. Industry in the greater Newark area suffered a great turnover of types of work, but, fortunately, pre-planning enabled most of it to go directly into production for civilian consumption.

The Industrial Relations Department's good relations with the radio tube, lamp, and chemical industries bore fruit in the form of orders being given this office weekly. This had not been done (though requested) since the war began. We feel our helpful relations with these companies during the war is responsible for their coming to us now, even though many applicants come to their doors. We have a recognition of our screening process, and overall helpfulness.

There were about eight thousand Negroes laid off in this area about two weeks after V-J Day. Although there have been more than that number laid off in the past four months, we believe no more than eight thousand were out of work at the same time. It is heartening to note that there are probably no more than 1500 to 2000 Negroes at present ready, willing, and able to work, who cannot find work with conditions commensurate with those worked under recently. Our problem here is one of low rates of pay, that make it impossible for workers with families and other responsibilities, to properly discharge those responsibilities. We see here that passage of S-1349 (HR-3914), revising the Wage and Hour Act to 65¢ an hr., would be helpful.

In addition to the customary interviewing and routine work, the Industrial Relations Secretary's activities during September included: work with three Veterans, expediting the acceptance by the Veterans' Administration of one Veteran's application for educational aid, his acceptance by the University of Newark, and cooperation from the New York School; Social Work; the placement of another Veteran (a continued case) in Barringer Evening School, and other help; the taking of initiative about clarifying the relationship of Urban Leagues and similar agencies in the state of New Jersey, with a series of four conferences (resulting with ample reward); the placement of another Negro sales clerk in a downtown department store; help on questions of closing of Nursery Schools operating under Lanham Act, with two meetings with the Newark Board of Education; secured regular information on the number of persons rejected at plants when referred by at least two community agencies, enabling us to know where our persuasion is needed most, or has not been effective; participation in planning for the Empty Stocking Fund, and work on a committee appointed by Mr. Williams, President of Bamberger's Department Store, to decide whether the schools should be allowed to have a part in the activities by collecting contributions among pupils for a needy child; conference with new Personnel Director of Federal Telephone & Radio (replacing previous Director with whom we had established good working relationships) about the companies releasing of some three thousand workers, finally including their only Negro typist who was placed through efforts of this office, and re-hiring problems; one public address to a church sponsored group of approximately 400 persons about Employment Problems.

during the month. Each item mentioned has many ramifications, some consuming a great deal of effort or study. Suffice it to say, more time has been consumed than can be measured by a 40 or 48 hr. yardstick; and, yet, your secretary is not satisfied with our contributions to the solution of the problems we face. We have an unprecedented opportunity to make gains "stick" in the next few months. Your secretary has clearly resolved the dilemma, and presented the matter to the Industrial Relations Committee. After consultation with Mr. Lett, your secretary has gone on to impress the Committee with the urgency of this period, and has presented concrete plans for our rise to the challenge. The Chairman of the Industrial Relations Committee will present this situation to the Board, and your secretary is confident that serious consideration will be forthcoming.

The employment program served 87 persons; 63 for factory, clerical, or professional work, and 24 for domestic work. There were 51 referrals to industrial or commercial companies; and 70 referrals to domestic service, only 4 of which were for full time work. There were 44 referrals to factories; 2 clerical referrals, and 5 referrals for professional work. There were 16 persons counselled; in the professional group, 4 persons counselled required 9 interviews.